

Message Text

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TO SECSTATE WASHDC PRIORITY 4566

C O N F I D E N T I A L ISLAMABAD 2662

FOR ATHERTON FROM BYROADE

E.O. 11652: GDS

TAGS: OVIP, PK,

SUBJECT: ADMISSION OF MR. SHAHNAWAZ BHUTTO TO HARVARD

1. RECENTLY PRIME MINISTER AND BEGUM BHUTTO ASKED MY ADVICE ABOUT A PROBLEM CONCERNING THEIR SON, SHAHNAWAZ BHUTTO. BHUTTO LET ME READ A LETTER FROM AMBASSADOR YAQUB KHAN ADDRESSED TO HIS OFFICE WHICH EXPLAINED THAT THE PAK EMBASSY HAD BEEN IN TOUCH WITH THREE HARVARD OFFICIALS TO PRESS THE CLAIM OF SHAHNAWAZ FOR ADMISSION TO HARVARD. THE OFFICIALS WERE THE DEAN OF ADMISSIONS, THE DIRECTOR OF ADMISSIONS AND THE FOREIGN STUDENT ADVISOR. THE OFFICIALS ADVISED THEM THAT SHAHNAWAZ'S BACKGROUND AND THE ASSOCIATIONS OF HIS FAMILY WITH THE UNIVERSITY WEIGHED STRONGLY IN HIS FAVOR. HOWEVER, THE DECIDING FACTOR WOULD BE HIS ACADEMIC RECORD AND THEY REGRET THAT IN THEIR JUDGMENT IT WOULD NOT BE REALISTIC TO EXPECT SHAHNAWAZ TO BE SELECTED FOR ADMISSION. THE LETTER INDICATES THAT SIDNEY SOBER HAS ALSO ATTEMPTED TO BE HELPFUL ON THE MATTER BUT HE RECEIVED ESSENTIALLY THE SAME RESPONSE FROM HARVARD. HARVARD APPARENTLY ADVISED THAT SHAHNAWAZ SPEND A YEAR IN A TUTORIAL SCHOOL OR COLLEGE SO THAT HE COULD IMPROVE HIS GRADES.

2. BHUTTO WAS CLEARLY IN A DILEMMA OVER THIS, SO MUCH SO THAT HE ASKED MY ADVICE AS TO WHAT I THOUGHT WOULD BE THE BEST THING TO TRY TO DO. HE KNOWS THAT SHAHNAWAZ
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HAS NOT WORKED HARD ENOUGH AS A STUDENT, BUT FEELS THAT

A PART OF THE FAULT LIES IN THE ABNORMAL SURROUNDINGS HE HAS HERE AS THE SON OF A PRIME MINISTER. HE BELIEVES HIS SON IS CAPABLE OF MAKING A GO AT IT AT HARVARD AND THAT HE WOULD BE UNDER PRESSURE TO DO SO BECAUSE OF FAMILY PRIDE, AND THE ACCOMPLISHMENTS OF HIS BROTHER AND SISTER AT HARVARD, RADCLIFFE, AND OXFORD. BECAUSE OF THESE PRESSURES, I BELIEVE HE THINKS THAT SHAHNAWAZ WOULD PRODUCE BETTER AT HARVARD THAN AT SOME UNKNOWN PREP SCHOOL.

3. THOSE OF US THAT KNOW SHAHNAWAZ CONSIDER HIM TO BE FAR ABOVE THE AVERAGE FROM AN INTELLIGENCE POINT OF VIEW. HE HAS NOT WORKED VERY HARD AT THE INTERNATIONAL HIGH SCHOOL BUT WE ARE INCLINED TO THINK HE WOULD PROBABLY MAKE A GO OF IT AWAY FROM THE PRESENT SURROUNDINGS AND ASSOCIATES HE HAS HERE IN VIEW OF HIS FATHER'S POSITION. THE FATHER-SON RELATIONSHIP IS A VERY STRONG ONE, AND WHILE I OF COURSE COULD BE WRONG, MY OWN VIEW IS THAT HE WOULD MAKE THE GRADE.

4. RECENTLY AT LARKANA I TOLD BHUTTO IF HE WANTED ME TO I WOULD SEE IF THERE IS ANY ADDITIONAL PERSUASION

THAT MIGHT BE PUT TO HARVARD ON THIS CASE, WARNING HIM THAT HARVARD STANDARDS WERE TOUGH AND THAT IT MIGHT NOT BE POSSIBLE TO MAKE MUCH INDENT. I SUGGESTED HE MIGHT CONSIDER TRYING TO GET SHAHNAWAZ BACK TO THE STATES JUST AS SOON AS HE COULD GET HIS HIGH SCHOOL CREDITS HERE WHICH WOULD BE ABOUT JUNE 1. IF THE PROPER SUMMER PREP SCHOOL ARRANGEMENT COULD BE MADE, OR EVEN PRIVATE TUTORING, WHICH WOULD BE DESIGNED TO EASE HIS FIRST FEW MONTHS AT HARVARD THIS MIGHT LET HIM DO BETTER IN THE CRITICAL PERIOD JUST AFTER HE ENTERS. I SAID I DID NOT KNOW HOW MUCH INFLUENCE SUCH AN ARRANGEMENT MIGHT HAVE ON HARVARD, BUT WOULD HOPE IT MIGHT HELP.

5. BHUTTO EXPRESSED HIS APPRECIATION FOR THESE THOUGHTS AND I GATHER WOULD APPRECIATE GREATLY ANYTHING WE MIGHT BE ABLE TO DO TO TRY TO INFLUENCE HARVARD TOWARDS ADMITTING SHAHNAWAZ.

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6. I DO NOT KNOW HOW TO APPROACH HARVARD FROM HERE AND THEREFORE SEE NO ALTERNATIVE BUT TO GIVE YOU THE PROBLEM. I, OF COURSE, WILL LEAVE IT UP TO YOU WHETHER YOU THINK THE SECRETARY MIGHT BE WILLING TO TAKE A HAND IN THIS ONE HIMSELF. ALSO, I LEAVE TO YOUR JUDGMENT WHETHER PAT MOYNIHAN MIGHT BE USEFUL. PERHAPS YOU WILL HAVE BETTER IDEAS BUT ANY HELP YOU CAN THINK

OF WOULD BE GREATLY APPRECIATED.
BYROADE

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